

Notice of Public Scoping

Grazing Permit Renewals and Land Health Assessments

Comment Period: Open until **October 31, 2004**

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The La Jara Field Office (LJFO) is soliciting public comments on the following two topics: First, we would like assistance in prioritizing allotments for the assessment of public land health standards for Colorado. Secondly, we intend to renew 11 grazing permit/leases as part a landscape health assessment during 2003 and 2004. We need to determine the level of public interest, concern, and resource conditions on each of the allotments up for assessment and renewal.

The assessment of public land health will be done on an allotment basis. During FY 2005 the LJFO will be completing land health assessment(s) in the following: Put in the Land area/allotment(s)/watershed where work will be completed in FY05

Once the FO receives the public comments, the staff will meet as an interdisciplinary team. Public comments and all other available information provided, will be used by the FO Inter-Disciplinary Team to complete the Land Health Assessment.

Following are the allotments and acreage identified in the FO that we are soliciting input regarding when the assessment will be initiated.

Allotment Name	Federal Acreage
Rio Grande	2,940
Alamosa	880
Triangle	3,715
Las Mesitas	87

The FO will be also be completing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and making decisions on the renewal of certain grazing permit/leases. Since the level of NEPA analysis is in part driven by the level of public interest and concern, your comments are requested relative to conditions you have observed on these allotments, and/or specific environmental concerns about the lands and/or resources found within the specific allotment. The more specific and factual your information is, the more helpful and useful it will be.

An interdisciplinary team will rank the expiring permits into high and low priority categories based on public comments and all other information available. The ranking will help determine the amount of consideration necessary and the appropriate level of NEPA documentation for reaching a decision on each grazing permit renewal. The ranking will also help to allocate resources to address concerns on a priority basis.

The following allotments will have a landscape health assessment starting in 2003 (filed work) and completed in Fiscal Year 2004. The level of NEPA analysis is in part driven by the level of public interest and concern. Your comments on these allotments is being sought.

Allotment Name	Federal Acres	Permittee/Lessee
South Valley	1,945	Viola & Danny Mondragon
Ox Bow	81	Ray Stewart
Ciscom Flat	3,680	Clyde & Martille Faatz
Tobin Creek	3,300	Tracy Kester et. al.

If you have any information or concerns, wish to be considered as an interested party on a permit or allotment, or wish to be involved in a health of the land assessment, please contact the individual at the address above to be put on a mailing list. If you do have not specific comments at this time but have questions about the land areas or allotments listed in this notice, contact the individual at the address above.

